

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

Q1	<p>Will recordings be available for these sessions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmatic and Evidence Informational Meeting Session • Technical Requirements Informational Meeting Session
A1	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Thursday, November 12, 2019, 10:00 am Programmatic and Evidence Information Meeting Session is available at the link below: NYS AmeriCorps Programmatic Informational Meeting Session-20191112 1503-1 https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/ldr.php?RCID=d90f0d7b708e40589b83b3ad27c5db6c</p> <p>The Thursday, November 12, 2019, 1:00 pm Technical Requirements Informational Meeting Session is available at the link below: NYS AmeriCorps Technical Informational Meeting Session-20191112 1802-1 https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/ldr.php?RCID=2bae8597b98a4750b60dc1bfdc6d671f</p>
Q2	<p>Section 2.3 Purpose & Funding Availability does not state how much money can be requested for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Operating or 2) AmeriCorps member positions <p>The NYS Grants Gateway Grant Opportunity Portal next to Total Funding Available leaves it blank.</p> <p>A. Can you please inform what size grants can be requested for either of both</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Operating or 2) AmeriCorps member positions. <p>B. Also, is there a minimum organization budget size for applicants?</p>
A2	<p>A. (1) Section 2.3 Purpose & Funding Availability does not address the actual amount available for funding for Operating costs. The actual amount and the timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual federal appropriations. Applicants recommended by the NYS Commission to the Corporation for Competitive funding will be entered into a national contest, competing with applicants from other states. As there is no specific federal amount set aside for operating grants for New York State applications in the Competitive Pool, OCFS cannot provide this information to bidders.</p> <p>A. (2) Section 2.3 Purpose & Funding Availability does not address the actual amount available for funding for AmeriCorps member positions as the actual amount and the timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual federal appropriations, OCFS cannot provide this information to bidders.</p> <p>B. Yes. There is a 10 MSY minimum. The maximum cost for 10 MSYs for AmeriCorps operating grant is 10 x \$15,479 or \$154,790. Applicants must budget for the minimum living allowance for full-time members. This information is available at the following</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

	<p>link: 2020 AmeriCorps State and National Grants NOFO FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION, Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY) on pp. 11-12.</p>
<p>Q3</p>	<p>Bidder’s Notice: “Strongly recommend the use of the two NSCHC vendors.” A. Can you provide further information on who these vendors are and how to reach them? B. Are they MWBE?</p>
<p>A3</p>	<p>A. In September 2015, CNCS contracted Fieldprint, Inc., (“Fieldprint”) to provide FBI fingerprint-based checks (“FBI checks”) to grant and sub grant recipients (“recipient(s)”). Fieldprint is one of a limited number of contractors, called Channelers, approved by the FBI to offer expedited access to the FBI’s national criminal history information. Service to CNCS recipients began in January 2016.</p> <p>In July 2018, CNCS approved Truescreen to provide state and National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) checks to recipients. Truescreen is a vendor approved by CNCS to provide NSOPW and state criminal history checks; research source-level documentation when needed; make adjudication recommendations to recipients; facilitate compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), including pre-adverse and adverse action notices; provide time records of relevant compliance steps like adjudication; and maintain records. All CNCS recipients may use Truescreen. Service to CNCS recipients began in November 2018.</p> <p>Click here for additional information on Fieldprint and Truescreen and how to reach these organizations.</p> <p>B. Fieldprint, Inc. and Truescreen are not listed as NYS Certified MWBE’s in the New York State Contract System directory.</p>
<p>Q4</p>	<p>A. Page 11. 2.4-Term of Contract. “Awards in response to this RFP for new or reconcompeting grants will result in multiyear contracts for a term of no more than thirty-nine (39) months – from the contract start date which consists of three (3) 15-month contract periods.” 15 months x 3 years = 45 months. Can you explain how you arrived at 39 months?</p> <p>The CNCS NOFO (page3) states that “CNCS anticipants making three-year grants.” That’s 36 months. Can you explain the discrepancy?</p> <p>B. Finally, if we’re looking at part-time members, what’s the contract period?</p>
<p>A4</p>	<p>A. The 39-month contract term consists of three 15-month contract periods, each containing a three-month overlap, which allows the contractor a covered period to recruit members and remain compliant with federal regulations, which includes providing full-time AmeriCorps members up to twelve (12) months to complete their terms of service.</p> <p>B. Part-time members must complete their term of service within a 12-month period.</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

Q5	<p>Page 19. 4.2-Program Requirements Based on AmeriCorps Grant Award an Application Types. A. Confirm that a new program can NOT receive a Full-Cost Fixed Amount grant? B. Are there mobilization monies awarded to new programs? C. How quickly is reimbursement made on cost reimbursement grants? D. What is the process by which grants costs are reimbursed? E. Can we qualify for a Full-Cost Fixed Amount in a future cycle?</p>
A5	<p>A. Confirmed-new applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full-cost Fixed Amount grants. See the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, p.5 for more information.</p> <p>B. The term “mobilization monies” is not defined. See Attachment F Budget Worksheet, 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions p.32, to help you make certain that you submit an accurate budget narrative that meets AmeriCorps requirements for allowable expenses.</p> <p>C. It usually takes approximately 30-days to process reimbursement for cost reimbursement grants. Please see Section III Payment and Reporting of the New York Standard Terms and Conditions in the New York Master Contract for Grant (link in section 8.0 of RFP).</p> <p>D. Grant costs are reimbursed through expenditure reports/claims submitted to the NYS Office of Children and Family Services through the Contract Management System (CMS) on a quarterly basis. Please see Section III Payment and Reporting of the New York Standard Terms and Conditions in the New York Master Contract for Grant (link in section 8.0 of RFP).</p> <p>E. Yes, you may be able to qualify for a full-cost fixed-amount grant in a future funding cycle.</p>
Q6	<p>Page 30. 2-Evidence Base: “All applicants, including new grantees, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field of the application”</p> <p>A. Please confirm that new applicants do NOT have to submit an evaluation plan.</p> <p>B. Per page 32, E. Evaluation Plan, please confirm that new applicants must submit a data collection plan in this field.</p>
A6	<p>A. All applicants, <u>including new grantees</u>, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field of the application (see Section E. Evaluation Plan); however, information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made. (Section 5.1-B.2 of the RFP).</p> <p>B. If the applicant is competing for the first time, a data collection plan should be provided in the “Evaluation Summary” or “Plan” field that includes the information requested in section 5.1.E of the RFP.</p>
Q7	<p>Page 30. 3-Notice Priority: “The applicant proposed program fits within one (1) or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities ...” A. Is there any competitive advantage in connecting a proposed program to more than one priority? B. And if we added a</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

	second focus area in our proposal, would we need to request permission from the Commission?
A7	<p>A. No, there is no competitive advantage in having more than one of the AmeriCorps funding priorities in an applicant's proposed program design.</p> <p>B. Applicants are not required to get permission from the Commission to have more than one AmeriCorps funding priority in your proposal.</p>
Q8	<p>A. Page 31. D-Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Is any narrative required to address this?</p> <p>B. Does the maximum cost per MSY = the total budget inclusive of BOTH the operating budget and the member living allowance? Or is the living allowance in addition to the operating budget?</p> <p>C. Is the living allowance paid by OCFS to the members, or does the applicant receive the living allowance money to pay the members?</p> <p>D. How often must the living allowance be paid to the member – weekly? Monthly?</p>
A8	<p>A. No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for "See budget," see section 5.1.D. of the RFP.</p> <p>B. The maximum cost per MSY is not inclusive of the operating budget and the member living allowance. See RFP Section 4.2 B, p. 19. The Maximum cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSY requested. The living allowance is included in the operating budget, 2020 AmeriCorps State and National Grants NOFO, Member Living Allowance pp. 10 – 11 for Member Living Allowance information.</p> <p>C. The living allowance is part of the grant budget and is paid to the members by the grantee.</p> <p>D. The applicant determines the frequency of living allowance payments to the members. Bi-weekly or weekly payments are considered best practices.</p>
Q9	Page 32. D-Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. If using a Federally approved Indirect Cost Rate, should we include a copy of this in our submission documents?
A9	No. Applicants that have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants. See the 2020 AmeriCorps Applications Instructions ATTACHMENT J: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate (IDCR) User Instructions In p. 43.
Q10	CNCS Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, page 5: "One Member Service Year (MSY) is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position (at least 1,700 hours of service)." If we seek to offer 20 reduced half-time positions at 675 hours, two part-timers would total 1,350 – or 79% of one MSY. Does that mean that when we calculate our budget, we should calculate 20 x .79 and bill for a maximum of 15.8 MSYs? Or are any two part-timers equal to one MSY?
A10	No. Two part time member positions (900 hours) may not equal one Full-time member position (1700 hours) See the 2020 AmeriCorps Applications Instructions Section II. Member Costs to assist you in calculating MSYs.

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

Q11	Can this funding pay for students' metro cards to travel to host sites?
A11	<p>Yes, this funding may support "other related expenses for members to travel outside their service location or between sites.</p> <p>See Section C. 2. Member Travel 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions on p. 22.</p>
Q12	<p>Regarding the Americorps State Grant 2020 RFP section 2.1 - Introduction - the list of focus areas are as follows:</p> <p>1. disaster services; 2. economic opportunity; 3. education; 4. environmental stewardship; 5. healthy futures; and 6. veterans and military families.</p> <p>In Section 4.1 it also includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEALTHY FUTURES – Evidence-based interventions found on the CNCS Evidence Exchange website. In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers. https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/HF_Evidence_Brief_FINAL_v2_508.pdf <p>OR Reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse.</p> <p>In this section it also includes:</p> <p>RURAL INTERMEDIARIES – Organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS. <p>A. Can you please confirm that Reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse is a priority area?</p> <p>B. Can you please confirm that faith-based organizations are a priority area? OR Can you please expand on what faith-based organizations is doing on this list? Are they a priority area? or are they merely eligible for funding?</p>
A12	<p>A. Yes, In the FY 2020 AmeriCorps competition, the Corporation for National and Community Service has listed Reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse under 2020 AmeriCorps funding Priorities.</p> <p>B. Yes, In the FY 2020 AmeriCorps competition, the Corporation for National and Community Service has listed Faith-based organizations under 2020 AmeriCorps funding Priorities.</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

Q13	We are interested in applying for NYS funding to have an AmeriCorps member work with our program. After reviewing the RFP, I am not clear whether we would be required to provide a match/cost reimbursement, or if our organization would be eligible for a fixed-amount grant?
A13	<p>That depends, if your organization is a new applicant, you are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are NOT eligible to apply for Full-cost Fixed Amount grants. See RFP Section 4.2 Program Requirements Based on AmeriCorps Grant Award and Application Types.</p> <p>It is up to the individual programs to make this determination. Note: The Commission has determined that an AmeriCorps program under this RFP must have a minimum of ten (10) Member Service Years (MSYs). See RFP Section 4.2 Program Requirements Based on AmeriCorps Grant Award and Application Types.</p> <p>Another option you may want to consider is to contact a currently funded AmeriCorps Grantee with a similar program mission to yours to see if they are interested in assigning a single AmeriCorps member to your organization as a site placement. See the New Yorkers Volunteer Website for a list of 2019-2020 AmeriCorps funded programs in New York State for program descriptions and contact information.</p>
Q14	We are completing the NYS documents, and a lot of them ask for a contract number – since our current contract is done after the current grant period and we are recompeting, what should we put in those sections, do we use the old(current) one?
A14	No, do not use the current contract number, enter, “TBD.”
Q15	What is a DUNS number and SAM?
A15	<p>The Data Universal Number System (DUNS) is a unique nine-digit identifier for a business created by credit bureau Dun & Bradstreet. DUNS numbers have become the standard numbering system to identify businesses across the globe. DUNS number—was <u>created and copyrighted in 1962</u> by Dun & Bradstreet. A DUNS number is a requirement to apply for CNCS grants (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) along with Employer Identification Number. Applicants will be required to enter this information during account creation in eGrants which is prior to the application submission.</p> <p>Vendors doing business with the federal government must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and obtain a SAM number. System for Award Management (SAM) is a huge database that includes every entity that is registered to do business with the federal government and is a requirement for vendors that want to bid on government contracts, either as a prime contractor or as a subcontractor. Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications requires that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications at the time of application submission must include: 1) a DUNS number, and 2) an Employer Identification Number in their eGrants application. Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost, or applicants can obtain information regarding applying on line by calling the request line at (866) 705-5711. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. Failure to

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

	<p>include a: 1) a DUNS number, and 2) an Employer Identification Number, at the time of application submission, will result in the disqualification of the application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All applicants must apply with the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.sam.gov/SAM/ prior to submitting an application. You must submit with your Section 1.6, New York State Supporting Documents, by the date specified in Section 1.2 either 1) proof of registration with an active SAM registration, or 2) documentation (an electronic copy of a receipt, screen shot or other documentation) that your organization has applied for SAM registration. Failure to submit this information at the time of application submission will result in the disqualification of the application. Active registration in SAM must be maintained throughout the life of the award if selected for funding. <p>For additional details, please see “3. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)” in page 9 of the CNCS Notice of Funding Opportunities (link).</p>
Q16	If I am a current planning grant grantee, would I be considered new applicant for this RFP and do I have to request new project permission from CNCS in order to apply?
A16	Yes, you will be considered a new applicant in order to apply for this RFP. Current planning grants will conclude at the end of the 15-month contract term. Any proposal submitted in response to this RFP (2nd year planning grant, operating grant, etc.) will be considered a new application. Please refer to the 2020 AmeriCorps State & National Mandatory Supplemental Guidance if you currently have another AmeriCorps grant. No, you do not have to have permission from CNCS to apply as a new applicant but must respond to this Request for Proposal.
Q17	Can you tell me if I can use NYS DOE funding as match?
A17	We are not able to provide a direct response since this question does not contain all the necessary information, for additional details, please see “Section VIII. Budget Instruction, A. Match Requirement” starting from page 9 of the 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions . In addition, when other federal funds are proposed to be used to meet match requirements, RFP Section 4.2., Cost Sharing or “Match” Requirements states, “The other federal agency must provide written permission to use its funds as program operating costs match on the AmeriCorps grant. All applications recommended to the Corporation, must provide proof of this in writing to OCFS and the Commission upon the Commission’s request.”
Q18	For the 10 MSY (Member Service Year) minimum requirement of the RFP, can I submit a proposal with configurations other than 10 FT (Full-Time) and still be eligible? May I apply with 20 HF (Half-Time) instead?
A18	Yes, you may apply with different slot configurations, as long as it meets the minimum of 10 MSY. For the calculation of each slot configuration, please see the formula in “ATTACHMENT D: Detailed Budget Instructions for Fixed Amount Grants (eGrants Budget Section)” starting from page 29 of the 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions .
Q19	What costs are allowable for this grant?
A19	For information regarding allowable costs, please see the budget categories and allowable expense in each category listed in “ATTACHMENT B: Detailed Budget Instructions for Cost

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

	Reimbursement Grants (eGrants Budget Section)” starting from page 20 of the 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions .
Q20	Is the administrative cost cap at 5%?
A20	CNCS allows three (3) different methods to calculate allowable administrative costs: a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method, a federally approved indirect cost rate method, or a deminimis method. For details on each of these methods, please see the budget categories and allowable expense in each category listed in “ATTACHMENT B: Detailed Budget Instructions for Cost Reimbursement Grants (eGrants Budget Section), Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs” starting from page 22 of the 2020 AmeriCorps Application Instructions .
Q21	Am I required to submit performance measures with my AmeriCorps grant application?
A21	Yes, all applications must include at least one (1) aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure, or an applicant determined measure depending on the program’s theory of change. Please refer to the 2020 AmeriCorps State and National Grants NOFO and Performance Measures Instructions for AmeriCorps State and National Performance Measure Requirements starting on p.3.
Q22	Which Notice of Funding Available (NOFA) and Grant Application ID do I apply to in the eGrants system?
A22	For new, recompeting, or continuation state commission applicants, including territories with commissions, applying for cost reimbursement grants: <u>AmeriCorps Cost Reimbursement Grant</u> Grant Application ID: 20AC220750 Grant #: 18ACHNY001 NOFA: FY 2020 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Continuations) Type: Continuation Status: Open for Sub applications For New Fixed Grant/Previous Grantees: <u>AmeriCorps Fixed Amount Grant</u> Grant Application ID: 20ES221007 NOFA: FY 2020 AmeriCorps State and Terr Comm Fixed Amount, EAP (New and Continuations) Type: New Grant/Previous Grantee Status: Open for Sub applications
Q23	The required Attachment A-2, Federal Assurances and Certifications form does not include a location for signature and date. Please advise.
A23	The Attachment A-2, Federal Assurances and Certifications form has been updated to include a signature block. Per Section 1.6 Submission of Proposals, New York State

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1025
AmeriCorps Competitive 2020

	Supporting Documents, the Attachment A-2, Federal Assurances and Certifications is required to be emailed to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov by application deadline for Submission of New York State Supporting Documents.
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